

From: Julie Christianson <mrsjuliechristianson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2017 4:09 PM
To: HECFS Exhibits
Subject: Testimony for hearing on paid family leave in Oregon

Hello,

My name is Julie Christianson and I live in Corvallis, OR. My representative is Dan Rayfield, my senator is Sara Gelser. I have two young children, ages 4 and almost 2. My husband owns a small business that is successful and I worked in education before I chose to stop working to raise my kids, so there was little financial benefit for me to keep working. I was lucky in that my family had the financial freedom to make that choice, but many of my friends and their families do not have that choice.

Breastfeeding is a full-time job for at least the first 4 months of a baby's life, and a 3/4 time job until they are 8 months or so. The health advantages for mother and baby of choosing to breastfeed have been extensively proven. If we had subsidized paid family leave, it would enable more mothers to be able to exclusively breastfeed successfully which I think would reduce our public healthcare costs in the long run.

Also, if there was paid family leave, then families would not have to pay for full-time childcare as soon. There seems to be a general consensus in the population that childcare should be quality and affordable. Would the cost of publicly subsidized childcare not decrease if families could afford to stay home for longer with their child because of paid family leave?

In addition to providing paid time off for new parents, this paid family leave would provide the option for people who have a sick or dying family member to take paid time off. This fall, my father in law who is 64, was diagnosed with aggressive brain cancer. My mother in law has multiple sclerosis and the caregiving burden on my husband has been significant. Our business is suffering because he is forever torn, between his immediate family of wife and children, his parents who are both struggling with health crises, and his business. Since he is the owner of a small business it would be difficult for him to take weeks in a row off, but I can imagine countless other workers in the state who could more readily take advantage of a paid family leave program.

As a small business owner, we provide as many benefits to our employees as we can, including health insurance and paid time off above the state requirement and retirement contributions. We wish to provide more benefits, but in order to remain competitive in the

construction market we cannot be as generous as our ideals would demand of us.

I think state subsidized paid family leave is an important step forward and I ask that it be voted out of committee on to the main house floor and eventually passed.

Thank you,

Julie Christianson

3355 SW Hawkeye Ave

Corvallis, OR 97333